

REMARKS

Claims 1-28 are pending in this application. Claims 7-28 are withdrawn. Claim 6 is amended.

I. Claim Amendment

By this Amendment, claim 6 is amended to correct an antecedent basis issue. Thus, no new matter is added by this Amendment.

II. Restriction/Election of Species Requirement

In reply to the December 17, 2004 Election of Species Requirement, Applicants provisionally elect Species 1, Figures 1a-1b, with traverse. At least claims 1-6 read on the elected species. As acknowledged by the Examiner, at least claim 1 is a generic claim.

It is respectfully submitted that the subject matter of all species is sufficiently related that a thorough search for the subject matter of any one species would encompass a search for the subject matter of the remaining species. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the search and examination of the entire application could be made without serious burden. See MPEP §803 in which it is stated that "if the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to independent or distinct inventions" (emphasis added). It is respectfully submitted that this policy should apply in the present application in order to avoid unnecessary delay and expense to Applicants and duplicative examination by the Patent Office.

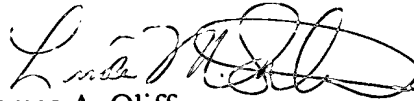
Thus, withdrawal of the Election of Species Requirement is respectfully requested.

III. Conclusion

A prompt and favorable examination of the application is respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner have any questions regarding the application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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